To all members of the Caltech community,

Since 2001, the Caltech Postdoc Association (CPA) has grown to serve the postdoc communities of CIT and JPL in numerous ways. This report details how the CPA used financial resources provided by the Office of the Provost to put forth various activities and programs over the previous year. This report also lays out future programming possibilities for the next year and describes the budgets required to achieve these programming goals.

The CPA fills a unique niche at the Institute. While postdocs at CIT have always benefited from working with many of the world’s most prolific faculty, several key areas involving professional and personal development have historically been underrepresented. Along with providing a strong voice for advocating positive change, the CPA has successfully offered postdocs a multitude of programming to supplement their research agendas. By working closely with the administration, and important campus agencies (e.g. Human Resources and the Career Development Center), the CPA has made significant progress in bettering the postdoctoral experience at the institute. For example, we successfully implemented our first ever independent survey of the entire postdoctoral community, garnering useful information on the needs of postdocs institute wide.

As noted within this report, our Career oriented programming grew over the past year to include more events to an expanding audience. We have also successfully partnered with the Graduate Student Council (GSC), the Career Development Center (CDC) and the Alumni Association to co-sponsor many programs of mutual interest. These partnerships, which will continue over the next year, help us to increase our programming while maintaining a lowered cost. The CPA has also continued the strong tradition of community, by bringing postdocs together from all divisions for numerous social events.

On behalf of the CPA, I would like to thank the Office of the Provost for financial and moral support. Indeed, all of our programming, activities, and events are a direct result of the shared vision between the CPA and Provost. I also thank the many faculty, administrators, and staff who have continued to support our efforts. Yet perhaps above all, the postdocs who serve the CPA and their community deserve extraordinary praise for their work. I thank our past and present
Board, notably former Chairs Lisa Taneyhill and Chad Haynes for their efforts, and I look forward to yet another successful year.

Best regards,
Jason M. Gonzales, CPA Chair 2006-07

Caltech Postdoctoral Association Mission –

*The Caltech Postdoctoral Association seeks to foster a sense of community, provide resources for career and personal development, and provide a framework for representation on campus and in the local community for postdoctoral scholars from all departments of the Institute.*

Members of the CPA Board and Committees –

**Jason Gonzales**, Chair, Career & Advocacy Committee Chair (gonzales@caltech.edu)

**Heather Pinkett**, Treasurer

**Chris Gandhi**, External Affairs Officer

**Jens Kaiser**, Membership and Communications Chair

**Herwig Just**, Social Committee Chair

**Claire Newman**, Member

**Anjanabh Saja**, Member

**Adri van Duin**, Member

**Periklis Pantazis**, Member

**Xin Luo**, Member

**Ben Deverman**, Member
Ex Officio Members
Ornah Becker (Ombudsperson)
Yvonne Banzali (Career Counselor)

CPA Advocacy Committee

The Advocacy committee has worked this past year to better quantify the quality of life of postdocs through the third annual postdoc survey, and has worked with the Caltech administration to address issues in the areas of salary, retirement, maternity leave and housing. We’ve also strengthened our relationship with the Ombudspersons Office and the Staff and Faculty Consultation Center, and maintained an active dialogue with Human Resources.

- **Survey** – The committee designed and implemented the first independent survey of postdoctoral issues. This was a completely new design of the survey from the ground up, taking some suggestions from the previous Sigma Xi survey for the 2004-2005 fiscal year. We had 40% of the Caltech postdocs complete the survey. Issues brought up in the survey will continue to be useful as the advocacy committee determines its future directions. Awards were given randomly to people completing the survey, and we would like to give special thanks to Human Resources for providing the grand prize for our survey (an Ipod Nano) and graciously providing assistance in disbursing the prizes.

- **Salary** – Survey analysis, and anecdotal evidence, indicates that many postdocs on campus are having financial troubles at Caltech. This is due to the combination of the high cost of living and the low salary structure for postdocs at Caltech. A preliminary meeting with the new President, Dr. Jean-Lou Chameau, informed the administration of the plight of many postdocs. We continue to plan to discuss the current salary structure with the administration.

- **Housing** – Recently, Housing transitioned most of their waitlisted, long-term apartments for postdocs and faculty into one-year term apartments. Some complaints from current tenants were addressed with Housing, but the new procedures need to stabilize before we can judge the situation. Currently there are four furnished apartments set aside for transitional housing for two to three months, and 62 unfurnished units with one year leases. The housing office indicated the possibility of extending the one year lease to two years, but we have opted to leave it at one year to make it easier for postdocs arriving from abroad or the East Coast to find housing without a separate trip to the Pasadena area.
• **Financial Planning** – Postdocs at Caltech (with an average age over 31) are financially illiterate, with only a small percentage actively planning for future expenses (retirement, children’s college expenses, first house purchases, etc …). We paid for a certified financial planner to visit Caltech and formally present the basic information necessary for people planning for their financial future. The event was well attended (approximately 50 people), and we plan to do it on an annual basis.

Budget FY06
Survey Design/Implementation $800
Survey Prizes $200
Financial Planner $550
**Total $1559**

Using last year’s expenses as a baseline and considering these estimates of future costs, we will require approximately **$1500 to cover our programming for fiscal year 2006-2007.**

**CPA Career Development Committee**

The CPA Career Development Committee has continued this past fiscal year in sponsoring diverse programming to support the career-related goals of Caltech postdocs. We are pleased to report that our events have experienced significant participation not only by postdocs, but also from graduate students and research staff. For example, the average attendance at our brown bag lunch series events is consistently around 60 postdocs and graduate students. In addition to serving the postdoc community, this year we held two events specifically in response to requests by graduate students for more content specific programming. Thus, the CPA strives to serve the whole Caltech community.

Our events fall into one of three categories: (1) successful job searching, including academic, industrial, and non-traditional careers (2) professional development, such as grant writing, negotiation, or public speaking, and (3) personal development, including work-life balance. These events range from informal brown bag lunch workshops to formal workshops and seminars. The cost of each event depends on its size, whether or not we are bringing speakers to campus, and the extent to which we provide food and beverages. These costs typically range from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars. A brief summary of the events from this past year is as follows.
Sept Science Writing Workshop
Sept Co-sponsorship of the CDC’s annual PhD/Postdoc career conference
March Alternative Career Fair
Sept Science Writing Workshop
Sept Co-sponsorship of the CDC’s annual PhD/Postdoc career conference

*programs directed toward the graduate student community

Our breakdown of expenses for FY 2006-7 is as follows.
Gift cards for speakers and panelists $200
Meals/refreshments $2200
Honorarium for speakers $500
Advertising/Printing $100
AV/event setup $100
Co-sponsorship of events with CDC $1500
Total $4400

We were able to save some expenses for the Career Committee by utilizing more resources from the Career and Development Center. For the coming year we are considering from a wide variety of possible events including: an international career fair, a grant writing workshop, more communication events and tax issues for international postdocs.

The Career Development Center (CDC) staff has been gracious in helping the career committee plan and organize events. In particular, Yvonne Banzali, a part-time CDC staff member, has been very generous to the CPA with her time, effort, and advice. We look forward to more collaboration with the CDC and other campus organizations in the coming fiscal year. Using last year’s expenses as a baseline and considering these estimates of future costs, we will require approximately $10500 to cover our programming for fiscal year 2006-2007.

**CPA Social Committee**
Our goal is to organize events which provide an easy way for postdocs and their families to:

a) Adjust to life at Caltech,
b) Meet people outside the work environment, and
c) Promote a healthy sense of community at the Institute.

With these goals in mind, we strive to host social events that benefit of our postdoc constituency:

1) Monthly CPA social hours. As in previous years, we have continued to hold these on the first Friday evening of every month at one of the Recreation Room of the Catalina student apartments. We provide free food and drinks, and this is a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in which to socialize with CPA members from Caltech and JPL. For new postdocs, this also provides an informal opportunity to ask existing postdocs about everything from finding an apartment to
getting a driver's license. In the email announcements, we ask people to bring along postdocs that are new at Caltech to these events. To cut costs of these events we have been buying the food at grocery stores (e.g. Trader Joe's) instead of having it organized by Burger Continental. We have had live music at one of these events and we are planning to have more in the upcoming year.

2) Theater trips. For nearly two years we have arranged monthly outings to see various Theater and Opera productions across the LA area. These trips are organized by Claire Newman and Diana Stefanescu. Unfortunately, Diana has left Caltech this year. CPA does not subsidize these outings, but we work to obtain group or other discounts wherever possible, and also arrange transportation for anyone interested in participating. Half of these outings are planned well in advance, and advertised to the full CPA membership. Trips have included Oleanna” by David Mamet in Hollywood, open air performances of Shakespeare's "Richard II" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in Barnsdall Park by the Independent Shakespeare Company, "My Fair Lady" in Glendale, "Clue" by Jonathan Lynn at the Hollywood Fight Club. The remainder of the outings are arranged at quite short notice (allowing us to obtain ~half price tickets, but effectively preventing us from advertising them to everyone in the weekly CPA mailings) and thus are advertised only to those signed up to the CPA theatre trips mailing list (to be added, please e-mail claire@gps.caltech.edu) which currently has 44 members.

3) Annual CPA Barbecue. Held at the end of August this year in Tournament Park the barbecue was again a great success, and attended by approximately 180 people. As in previous years the barbecue was catered by Mesquite BBQ, and we also provided drinks and additional food. Children were kept entertained at the activities table as well as by several games and races, not forgetting the chance to take a swing at a couple of piñatas! Everyone who attended also received a free raffle ticket, with the top prizes ranging from massages by Ching Lee from the "Center for Well Being" in Sierra Madre, www.centerwellbeing.com, a gift certificate for a face therapy at Immaculé Medical Aesthetics (worth ~$100), a gift certificate from Radhika's Indian Cuisine and other prizes ranged from $25 Target, Trader Joe's and Stone Cold certificates and $10 movie vouchers to $5 Starbucks gift cards.

   In September, we have organized a beach trip to Huntington Beach. In the coming year we will continue these activities, but are always looking for ways to do more (e.g. we are planning to organize hikes on the weekend). In particular, if you are interested in helping out with our ongoing events, or are interested in arranging any other activities, please contact us about joining the social committee!

4) Family Event. On July21st we had our first ever family event. Many postdocs with children at Caltech live under very tight financial considerations, so we want to make family events available for postdocs and their families. Or first event was held at the Caltech Y, and involved food (catered by Hop Woo Chinese Restaurant) and activities (kids movies, toys, balls and games) for kids and their parents. We had over 120 people attend and want to make this a regular part of our social calendar.
5) Halloween party. At the end of October the CPA Halloween party was held in the Dabney Lounge and Garden. The venue was decorated for Halloween and we supplied Pizza, drinks and music for the dressed-up attendants.

We plan to organize both of these events again this year.

Budget Fiscal Year 2006-2007

Monthly Social Hours:
Food & Drinks $333

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Monthly Social Hours Total ($530x12) = $4000

Annual BBQ (includes hiring park, food, drinks, non-donated prizes for raffle and kids games, miscellaneous) = $3000

Family Event (July 17) $1000
Halloween Party $1000
Summer Cocktail Party $1200

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Total Spent FY 2006-2007 = $10200

Using last year’s expenses as a baseline and considering these estimates of future costs (we want to have 3-4 family events a year), we will require approximately $11000 to cover our events for fiscal year 2007-2008.

CPA Outreach Committee

2005-2006 Outreach Summary

During the 2004-2005 academic year, the outreach activities which were directly linked to the actions of the CPA were limited. Apathy of the postdoc population was partly to blame. However, the CPA outreach efforts were not sufficiently well structured to allow postdocs easy access to community projects, without causing excess stress on the postdocs already busy schedules.

2006-2007 Outreach plans

The major goal of this year is to re-establish the CPA’s role in creating and mediating outreach activities. This will enable Caltech postdocs to contribute to the community in a manner which is
beneficial to both sides. Historically, the main stumbling block towards postdoctoral participation in outreach activities is the heavy work burden of postdocs. The resulting situation is many postdocs would like to participate in outreach activities, but feel they have insufficient time. This year a framework will be constructed in which it will become easy for postdocs to become involved. It will enable postdocs to help the community in a manner which is not overly burdensome on their time.

To these aims, the CPA outreach website will be re-organized to allow for links to various organizations and charities in which postdocs may wish to contribute their time. The use of small incentives, such as vouchers for coffee will be implemented to raise the profile of planned CPA activities, and to give a needed ‘activation energy’ for the process. The use of the monthly CPA social hour as a ready made place and time to discuss and recruit willing postdocs will be encouraged. In addition to the social hour, greater publicity will be generated through a variety of mediums, including email and paper flyers. Further links will be fostered between the GSC and Caltech Y outreach activities, to learn from their experience, and to allow for better implementation of the CPA’s own activities.

Additionally we have contributed some of our funding to other Caltech organizations holding events of interest to the Caltech Community. This year we contributed $200 to Engineers for a Sustainable World (ESW) and $300 to the Caltech C.

Budget fiscal year 2006-2007

Contribution to ESW $200.00
Contribution to the Caltech C $300.00

Total budget request $500.00

We are requesting a similar amount for fiscal year 2007-2008.

**CPA Organization**

The CPA’s strength lies with our ability to organize postdocs from across the Institute and JPL. Along with electronic and printed communications, our website, administered by CIT Information and Technology Services, serves as an effective source of a variety of information.
The CPA web site is indeed a critical resource for Caltech postdocs and provides our most cost-effective method for information delivery to postdocs in the Caltech community. To improve the appearance and informational content of our website, we designed and launched a new CPA website in June of 2006. As the CPA does not publish a print newsletter, our organization news is passed on to Caltech postdocs via our website and weekly e-mails. The CPA website (http://cpa.caltech.edu/) is maintained by a Caltech staff member at a rate of $35/hour. For fiscal year 2006-2007, our total routine maintenance and design cost was $2000. In addition to website maintenance we have costs associated with our Town Hall meeting, recruiting, liaisons with external postdoc associations and other incidental costs. For FY 2006-2007, we request $4000.00 for maintenance and an update to the site that will contain additional information for new postdocs.

The CPA will continue to work with Human Resources, to construct material of practical use to new postdocs. Some examples of this material are: a printable check-in checklist for new postdocs who arrive on campus, information about time management, information on constructing an “individual development plan” for the postdoc experience at Caltech, and links to information from the Caltech Career Development Center and Postdoctoral Scholars Office. While some information is already available for new postdocs at the Postdoctoral Scholars Office website, we wish to expound upon this, including lists of administrator contact names and phone numbers for each program/option/division on campus (as most require check-in procedures in addition to the Human Resources check-in), information on keys, e-mail accounts, parking, etc.

**CPA External Affairs**

The CPA maintains an active external affairs component designed to increase our visibility and communication with other organizations. Examples of these activities include serving as an Affiliate Member of the University of California Council of Postdoctoral Scholars (UC-CPS). The CPA has sent representatives to previous UC-CPS meetings. While we are not under the UC system, and thus do not have voting rights within the Council, we continue to serve in an advisory capacity to help representative postdoc organizations evolve into effective societies.

In addition the External Affairs Officer represents the CPA to the Caltech Alumni Association (CAA). This relationship now enables CIT postdocs to join the CAA with the same rights and benefits afforded to traditional CIT alumni. We continue to push this relationship, encouraging people to interact with the CAA, and are maintaining an ongoing relationship with the CAA to develop appropriate career related programming.
REPORT FROM THE TREASURER

Cash flow activity for 2007

Office of the Provost $26,000

Project # PROV.PDA
Award # OAIC.000001

Summary of expenses for POETA PROV.PDA

For the 2006-2007 fiscal year, the funds were spent as indicated below:

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Social</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
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<td>Total spent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remaining funds</td>
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We must emphasize that some expenses have not yet cleared, which would explain why our total spent does not match up with the sectional expenses.
We are extraordinarily grateful for the $26000 contributed in fiscal year 2006-2007 by the Provost to our organization. Drs. Jennings (Provost) and Goodstein (Vice Provost) have demonstrated vigorous support for the CPA and our efforts. The CPA recognizes the success of this relationship and looks forward to continued cooperation with Professor Ed Stolper (the new Provost). After years of experience, we feel the budgetary estimate is an accurate prediction of funds necessary for us to continue to grow our services to the postdoctoral community.

Caltech Postdoctoral Association Budget Request Fiscal Year 2007-2008

Advocacy $1000
Career $10500
Social $11000
Outreach $500
Organization $4000
Total funding request $27000